

Speech: PM speaks at Creative Industries reception: 8 May 2018

Good evening everyone. It is a pleasure to welcome some of Britain's great creative minds to Downing Street today, and I hope you have had the chance to admire some of the great British art we have here at Number 10. From Henry Moore to Stanley Spencer, who was brought up in my constituency, to Tracey Emin are represented here.

It's a real who's who of British art but our artists, modern and contemporary, are not the only world-leaders in our creative industries. I think what is great here this evening is that we have people from so many different aspects of our creative industries.

So while our films captivate audiences the world over, our fashion designers surprise and delight, our architects are shaping skylines and cityscapes on every continent.

In publishing, in music, in advertising and more, the UK consistently punches well above its weight. And every day our creative industries fly the flag for Britain on the global stage. Every year our creative industries contribute £92 billion to the economy, providing work for more than two million people right across the country.

I am not just talking about the big names, the stars of stage and screen who we all recognise, the sector provides highly skilled jobs right across the board. Technicians, producers, researchers, designers, coders, set builders, make-up artists.... The unsung heroes, the people without whom our creative industries would not be the worldwide success that they are.

But of course, the value of culture and creativity lies not only in its economic strength. Just as important is the less tangible contribution that it makes to our national life. The work you do brings joy to millions. It fosters unity, gives us a common currency. It helps to define and build our sense of national character.

"Without culture [...] society is but a jungle". Your work is a vital part of our national life and our national economy, and I am absolutely committed to supporting it.

And of course since 2015, Arts Council England has invested over £1 billion in arts and culture, with grants being made right across the country.

Our ambitious sector deal for the creative industries, announced just before Easter, will see a further £150 million invested by government and industry, spreading success and making the sector fit to face the future.

And today, I'm delighted to announce a £3 million fund that will provide a new source of finance for creative and cultural organisations across the North of England. Offering a mix of grants and loans, the social investment

fund will be open to non-profit, community-based organisations that deliver a positive social impact.

And it will form part of the legacy for this summer's Great Exhibition of the North: a game-changing moment for the region that showcases the very best of the North's culture and creativity.

But our support goes beyond the financial. As we leave the European Union, we will continue to work with our European friends to protect cultural heritage and promote cultural diversity.

And, in Matt Hancock you've got a Secretary of State who really gets what the sector is all about, and is enthusiastic about it, and I know he is already doing great work with many of you who are here tonight.

Our creative industries really are at the heart of what makes Britain great. As I say, from the big screen to the local gallery, your sector has consistently led the world for many, many years – and I look forward to that success continuing for many more years to come.

Thank you for all that you do. Thank you for all that those who work with you do. And long may it continue.